

of each other. Not miles or years or even death! Love is always present tense, and love never comes to an end!!

Clearly, what God asks of us is not just theoretical love, love-in-the-abstract. Not at all! God challenges you and me to flesh out our love in acts of living prayer and lives of authentic service. Unless our hands are clasped in love, nothing else really matters.

Robert Giaimo understood that challenge, and he lived that faith with sincerity and simple conviction. Harry Truman (God bless him!) once said that the politicians of his era used to pour God over everything—like ketchup! (By the way, I don't know what President Truman would have to say about the current level of religiosity in our political discourse, but I for one would dearly love to hear it!!!)

But Bob Giaimo's faith was never showy or self-congratulatory. He didn't preach sermons, he just served people.

This was a man who regularly walked the corridors of power, but never forgot his roots, his heritage, his humanity. His towering stature made him an imposing presence, but his genuine humility made him a caring person and a lasting friend. And, of course, a deeply devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

The pulpit is not a place to assess his political achievements, but I can't resist a heartfelt "Thank you!" to the man who was so influential in creating the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities. He firmly believed that the arts not only enrich our lives but actually instruct us how to live. (That's one of the reasons I began this eulogy with that Arundel anecdote.)

Our brother has now passed beyond our sight but not at all beyond our reach. He is quite literally only a prayer away. And on each day of our continuing journey of faith, he will continue through the power of his prayer to reach into our lives: to touch us, to lead us, to help us. Because, for Robert Giaimo it has always been quite personal!

And isn't that precisely the point Jesus is making in today's gospel selection? Notice the Lord did not say to His anxious Apostle: "Thomas, I will show you the way, I will teach you the truth, I will give you life." No: it's absolutely personal. "Thomas, I AM the Way and the Truth and the Life."

No one was ever saved by words or rituals, by laws or creeds. We are saved by the powerful Person of the Lord, and we show our acceptance of that great gift by cherishing all the precious people who share our journey.

So, when all is said and done, Bob Giaimo's gift to us was not a legacy of laws but of loving service. Power passes, and fame is fleeting. "What will survive of us is love."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

PAYNESVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT, PAYNESVILLE, MINNESOTA

• Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor the Paynesville Area School District, in Paynesville, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

The Paynesville Area School District is truly a model of educational success. The district administrators, teachers, staff, and parents have remained focused on the District's mission: "Success for Everyone Through Quality Learning."

The commitment of the entire community to the education of its children has earned the Paynesville Area School District's high school a five-star rating in both math and reading, one of only seven percent of schools in the State that can make that claim. The elementary school also earned a five-star rating in reading. Paynesville is very proud of the fact that it is the only district in greater Minnesota that has five stars in reading for both its elementary and high schools.

Paynesville, a rural community, continually seeks new ideas to remain competitive in a progressive society while cherishing local history and tradition. Along with the fundamentals of reading, writing, and mathematics, the district also emphasizes respect as a basic value.

The Paynesville Area School District offers a number of innovative programs, including full-day kindergarten for everyone; children in kindergarten and first grade are grouped by ability; teachers in grades 2 and 3 remain with the same teacher for 2 years in a row; parents can view children's grades through the district's Web site; and College in the Classroom courses are available for fundamentals of college writing, rhetoric, and introduction to literature, allowing students to earn college credit in these subjects.

The Paynesville Area School District also offers a wide variety of cocurricular activities, including: an award-winning Future Farmers of America Program, a Future Leaders of America Program, and a Business Professionals of America Program. The middle school band has been rated "Best Young Band," and the high school choir performed at candlelight processions at Disney's Epcot Center in 2000 and 2004.

Much of the credit for the Paynesville Area Public School's success belongs to its superintendent, Mr. Todd Burlingame, and the district's dedicated principals, teachers, and staff. The students and staff at the Paynesville Area School District understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at the Paynesville Area School District should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate the Paynesville Area School District in Paynesville for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

LITTLE FALLS COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL, LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA

• Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Little Falls Community Middle School, in Little Falls, MN, which recently earned an Award for Excellence

in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Little Falls Community Middle School is truly a model of educational success. Every year since 1997, its Language Arts Department has invited well-known authors to work with the students to help develop their writing skills. Students are assigned beforehand to read one or more of each author's books. This approach to teaching both an appreciation of reading and improved writing skills works very well in a middle school setting.

This year, Will Weaver was invited to work with the students. Some other authors who have participated are Will Durbin, Patricia Calvert, and Earl Fleck. The author spends 2 days teaching techniques for writing stories that allow the reader to "feel" what is happening. The authors discuss their favorite books, how they came up with the ideas for their books, how long it takes to write a chapter, and how they were able to get their first books published. Students come away from the experience believing that they, too, can become good writers.

Another program unique to the school is its annual Water Festival, which allows sixth-graders to travel each year to nearby Camp Ripley for hands-on experience learning about the significance of water in our environment. The festival offers children an opportunity to discover how important water is in their lives and how we ourselves affect water, positively or negatively. They learn about water purification techniques, invertebrates that live in the water, wetland habitat, the history of the Mississippi River, and the characteristics of a watershed. The school makes use of National Guard staff, Department of Natural Resources Specialists, and representatives from the Science Museum of Minnesota.

This year, Little Falls Community Middle School suffered a tremendous loss when one of its teachers, Mr. Lee Hochsprung, died suddenly. He had enjoyed spending time with his family, teaching at the middle school for 31 years in language arts, EBD, and social studies, hunting, fishing, camping, cooking, watching his children play sports, announcing wrestling matches, listening to all kinds of music, and reading history. He was a compassionate person, a motivator, and a loving husband, father, and loyal friend. The Little Falls community will remember Lee for his stories, jokes, great teaching skills, fabulous coaching ability, gift for connecting with students and parents, capacity for fun, and love for all children, especially for his own children, Laura, Paul, Phil, and Katie, and his wife Julie.

Much of the credit for Little Falls Community Middle School's success belongs to its principal, Dr. Maxine Strege, and the dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Little Falls Community Middle School understand that in order to be successful, a school must